

Agenda Report

DATE: APRIL 9, 2001
TO: CITY COUNCIL/PASADENA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
FROM: CYNTHIA J. KURTZ, CITY MANAGER/CEO
SUBJECT: APPROVE THE REFINED CONCEPT PLAN FOR THE PASADENA CIVIC CENTER/MID-TOWN DISTRICT DESIGN PROJECT

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council/Community Development Commission (PCDC), approve the Amended "*Refined Concept Plan for the Pasadena Civic Center/Mid-Town District Design Project.*" (Attachment No. 4 with Addendum).

BACKGROUND:

City Center Implementation Task Force Recommendation: The City Center Implementation Task Force (the "Task Force") recommended that the City Council/PCDC approve the Refined Concept Plan document with addendum. Letters from the Task Force and the Library Commission supporting the Refined Concept Plan are included with this report (Attachment No. 2).

City Advisory Body Recommendation: The Refined Concept Plan was also reviewed and recommended for approval by the Transportation Advisory Commission, Arts Commission, the Design, Planning and Cultural Heritage Commissions, Library Commission, Community Development Committee and the Pasadena Center Operating Company.

Project History:

The Civic Center/Mid-Town Design Project Refined Concept Plan is the second major product of the City Center Implementation Task Force's ongoing efforts that began in 1997 with the Mayor and City Center Task Force. The Task Force, comprised of representatives of city advisory bodies and the business and development community, worked with Moule & Polyzoides Architects to produce the Civic Center/Mid-Town Programming Effort Report, a plan providing recommendations for both public and private properties and spaces in the Civic Center District. This plan was accepted by the City Council on April 6, 1998. The work of the original task force was continued by the City Center Implementation Task Force, comprised of the same representative bodies as the original Task Force, with a charge to oversee the implementation of the Civic Center/Mid-Town Project and other developments proposed

for the Civic Center District. In 1999, following a competitive process, Team Pasadena, a group of multi-disciplinary design consultants led by The Arroyo Group, was selected to prepare concept and design development documents for public improvements within the District. The Refined Concept Plan is the culmination of a collaborative effort of the Task Force, the Community and City staff. The plan provides recommendations for public space improvements, transportation and parking within the District. The Executive Summary, an abbreviated synopsis of the information contained in the Refined Concept Plan, is included with this report as Attachment No. I.

The Refined Concept Plan:

The Refined Concept Plan is based on, and carries out the intent of the 1925 Bennett Plan for the Civic Center District, a Beaux-Arts inspired plan with grand vistas, and prominent buildings at the ends of the major axes. The Plan introduces several elements which are intended to implement both the 1925 Bennett Plan and the 1998 Programming Effort Report, including the development of Centennial Square and the reestablishment of the Beaux-Arts axial view of Garfield Avenue from the Central Library through to the Civic Auditorium. Throughout the year 2000, the Consultant Team met monthly with the Task Force and held two public workshops with the community, in order to solicit input and develop a specific set of design recommendations for the District that would closely follow the 1998 Programming Effort report. The major elements of the Refined Concept Plan are as follows:

- **Circulation:** The Plan incorporates traffic calming measures for the Civic Center District, including a traffic circle within Centennial Square with direct auto access to the steps of City Hall; upgraded pedestrian crossing areas within Centennial Square and at intersection areas along the Garfield Promenade for increased pedestrian safety; two parking court areas located adjacent to Centennial Square; and reconfiguration of Thurgood Marshall as a one-way street with the addition of 13 parking spaces to accommodate the daily needs of City Hall patrons.
- **Centennial Square/Garfield Avenue/ Holly Street Promenade:** Centennial Square area will be redesigned to serve as a grand and civic space that will accommodate a wide range of daily public activities. Improvements include a traffic circle, water fountain, pedestrian crossing areas, decorative paving, trees, landscaping and public art. Garfield Avenue design improvements include the reopening and redesign of Garfield Avenue through Paseo Colorado; decorative, historic sidewalk paving along Garfield Avenue to match the historic paving adjacent to City Hall; Holly Street design elements will include a green median, garden rooms, decorative paving to match the historic brick sidewalk in front of City Hall, refurbished drinking fountains, pavilions, infill trees and landscaping.
- **Streetscape & Walkways Elements:** The Plan provides concept recommendations for District-wide landscaping and lighting, including pedestrian-scaled lights and historic building façade lighting, new District signage, graphics and street furniture.
- **Implementation Plan:** The plan provides preliminary financing strategy recommendations for funding implementation of the proposed public improvements, preliminary capital costs, capital funding sources and other outside funding sources.

Review And Approval Process:

The Refined Concept Plan was prepared by Team Pasadena and submitted for review and recommendation of the Task Force on October 17, 2000. The Task Force endorsed the information contained in the document, after which the Plan was presented the Transportation Advisory Commission, Arts Commission, the Design, Planning and Cultural Heritage Commissions, the Library Commission, Community Development Committee and the Pasadena Center Operating Company for review and recommendation. During review of the Refined Concept Plan, a list of 49 comments were generated by city advisory bodies on the document, and these comments are attached as Attachment No. 3. The City Advisory bodies voted unanimously to approve the Refined Concept Plan document without any conditions of approval.

In February 2001, the Plan was brought back to the Task Force in order to discuss the nature of any comments generated by City Advisory bodies on the Refined Concept Plan. Public Works and Transportation staff brought forward additional traffic-related information regarding the Walnut Street/Garfield Avenue intersection. The Plan called for elimination of the left-turn travel lane from Walnut Street heading south onto Garfield Avenue to accommodate pedestrian/sidewalk improvements for the Central Library area. Public Works and Transportation staff determined that the elimination of this traffic lane would negatively impact Walnut Street, as it is a major mobility corridor and east-west truck route through the City. Based on this information, the Task Force voted unanimously to recommend that the City Council/PCDC approve the Refined Concept Plan with an addendum to maintain the left-turn lane at the Walnut/Garfield intersection.

MTA Grant Application for Civic Center Improvements:

On February 2, 2001, City staff submitted a grant proposal to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) in response to their 2001 year "Call for Projects". The City applied for project funding under the "Pedestrian Improvement" category. If awarded, the grant will provide approximately \$14 million in funding to complete engineering design, construction documents and installation of all improvements identified in the Refined Concept Plan. The City would be responsible for a 20% local match of funds to undertake the project if awarded the grant, and this money would be generated through both private and public funding. The MTA expects to award the grants in June 2001. If approved, this grant would provide the funding necessary to undertake construction of approved design elements once design development documents have been prepared and approved by the City Council/PCDC.

Conclusion:

Following approval of the Refined Concept Plan by the City Council/PCDC, the design development phase of the project will be initiated. At this time, the Task Force will select the most appropriate design details for Centennial Square/Garfield Avenue/Holly Street; streetscape and walkways elements; public art; transportation and parking improvements and make final recommendations for financing capital, operations and maintenance costs, to ensure successful implementation of the project.

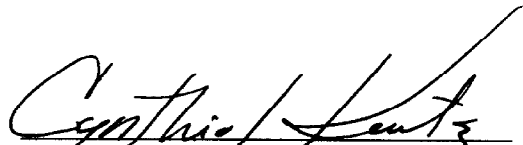
FISCAL IMPACT:

The City has applied for a grant with the MTA (as noted above) for approximately 12.8 million of the projected \$16 million total cost estimated to complete all of the improvements proposed for the project. Provisions of the MTA grant application requires that the City contribute a 20% match, or approximately

\$3.2 million in funding for the project. Housing & Development has requested that \$1million of Community Development Commission funds be allocated in the department's FY-2002 budget as part of the local match requirement for this project. Other sources of matching funds may include private developer contributions. Trizec-Hahn will contribute to the project by installing approved streetscape elements as part of the construction of the Paseo Colorado project. Other private developments, such as the Plaza Las Fuentes Phase II project, would also contribute to the match by including the cost of the approved streetscape elements in the development of their project.

Should the MTA grant not be approved, the City will reapply for the grant in subsequent applications, and utilize the \$1million FY2002 budget request, if approved, to fund a portion of the Civic Center improvements identified in the Plan as part of a Phase I implementation. City staff will also pursue other grant opportunities described in the financing strategy recommendations portion of the Refined Concept Plan.

Respectfully submitted:



Cynthia J. Kurtz, City Manager/CEO

Prepared by:



KAREN L. BALCHUNAS
Project Planner

Approved by:



RICHARD J. BRUCKNER
Director of Housing & Development

Enclosures: Attachment No. 1: Executive Summary, Civic Center/Mid-Town District Project Refined Concept Plan, Prepared by Team Pasadena, Dated October 27, 2000

Attachment No. 2 Letters of support for the Refined Concept Plan document from the City Center Implementation Task Force and the Library Commission.

Attachment No. 3: Comments generated on the Project by various City Advisory Bodies during review of the Refined Concept Plan document.

Attachment No. 4: "Refined Concept Plan for the Pasadena Civic Center/Mid-Town District Design Project." dated October 17, 2000, prepared by Team Pasadena, including amended Page 72 reflecting change to the Walnut Street/Garfield Avenue intersection